

## CHAPTER 5

# The Role of Motivation in Engaged Reading of Adolescents

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This chapter:

- Discusses the role of motivation in engaged reading by exploring how general motivation constructs can inform better practices.
- Explores why motivation can play a particularly crucial role in adolescents' literacy learning and practices.
- Shows how specific motivation constructs can be used to guide "best practices" for normally achieving students and struggling adolescents.

What is motivation? What are some common conceptions and misconceptions about the importance and role of motivation in adolescents' reading? Before we explore the complex topic of motivation and consider instructional possibilities for improving motivation related to adolescent reading, we examine some common misconceptions and oversimplifications of the term.

When we initially started to explore the construct of motivation in instructional settings about a decade ago, we created an organizer to characterize the way educators talk about it. We believe that the following statements, gleaned from anecdotal records, classes, and professional development sessions, exemplify common but inaccurate perceptions about motivation. After each statement, in *italics*, we explain how the characterization in the statement shapes the misconceptions many educators have constructed about motivation.

- "I wish my students were more motivated." *Motivation is just something kids have or develop. Some kids are motivated and some are not.*
- "My students last year were more self-motivated." *Motivation reflects a sort of self-discipline some students have to persevere or work harder than others. Regardless of tasks and instructional factors, some kids are just more determined and self-directed.*
- "I just don't know what I can do to motivate these students." *Motivation is perceived by students as some kind of immediate encouragement that suddenly sparks their interest and activity.*
- "I think my class is losing some of its motivation." *Motivation is a diminishing, nonrenewable resource. If you lose it with a group of kids during a given year, it may be gone for good.*

As we illustrate in this chapter, the definitions of motivation implicit in the bulleted statements above represent common but inaccurate conceptions of both the construct of motivation and the degree to which teachers can influence it in the arena of literacy practices and learning. In fact, the statements are antithetical to research on best practices for facilitating motivation and engaged reading because they construct motivation as something that is magically present or that mysteriously disappears in some students regardless of the instructional environment, quality of teaching, or specific strategies that good teachers employ. Some statements also portray motivation as something that is elusive—beyond teachers' control. However, these perceptions do not adequately capture what motivation is or how it is developed or sustained.

The research literature on motivation yields a range of perspectives and definitions. For example, the terms *interest*, *attitude*, and *motivation* sometimes mean the same thing in the literature (e.g., Mazzoni & Gambrell, 1999). *Interest* might refer to preferences for certain topics, genres, or reading tasks. If readers are interested, they may be more *intrinsically* motivated—that is, they read because they want to and they find it enjoyable. If they choose reading over other activities, we could say that they have a positive *attitude* toward reading. As we get into some of the dimensions of motivation, the interrelation and interdependence of these dimensions is obvious. For example, persons who have generally positive perceptions about their abilities feel self-efficacious; that is, they believe that they have the ability and specific strategies to succeed at specific tasks. If they are working toward goals that they believe are important, they place high value on reading and related tasks (Wigfield & Eccles, 2001). So the best way to understand the research base for best practices in promoting motivation in reading is to know enough about the various dimensions that make up the concept of motivation to understand how they intersect.

## WHY MOTIVATION IS IMPORTANT FOR ADOLESCENTS

Before we start the central discussion about motivation and adolescents, we acknowledge that the term *adolescence* has many definitions and that individual students' identities are much more complex and significant than membership in a community, developmental stage, or age group (see Dillon & Moje, 1998; Moje & Dillon, 2006). We touch on developmental issues aligned generally with chronological age in two groups of students: (1) typically progressing, competent readers, and (2) so-called "struggling" readers. For the first group, we look at learners who have traversed the excitement of the earliest stage of learning how to read, the engaging experience of accessing new worlds through texts, the identification with characters in stories who are like friends, and the association of reading with community and enjoyable time with peers and teachers.

We want to start the discussion with readers 10 or 11 years old. At this juncture many youth have learned to read narrative texts, take an interest in series books, and have favorite authors and genres. But many of these same students start to feel emerging reservations about reading as a school subject. They start to dislike reading textbooks in school subjects and form some soon-to-be deeply engrained notions of reading tasks related to schoolwork that may mitigate against their future motivation to read a range of texts for a variety of purposes.

The latter group, the struggling readers, by age 7 or 8, have started to see themselves as less competent than their peers. At this relatively early age they are becoming painfully aware of the difference between ability and effort. They are starting to disengage from reading and other literate practices to preserve self-esteem, realizing that getting better seems beyond their control. Overall, they read much less than more competent peers; they develop coping strategies to negotiate school tasks without reading; and they fall further and further behind. Next, we present frameworks for thinking about how to motivate and engage readers—with some distinctions between competent and struggling or disengaged readers.

### MOTIVATION FRAMEWORKS FOR GUIDING BEST PRACTICES

Why hasn't the topic of motivation found its way into discussions about reading and literacy learning until relatively recently? First, much of the current discussion about adolescent literacy concerns struggling readers, particularly how to bring these readers "up to grade level." The predominant model for "not leaving anyone behind" embraces the most technically efficient solution for equipping these youth with strategies and skills that will help them read more proficiently; that is, proficient reading as

defined by performance on large-scale standardized assessments (Dillon, 2003). Using motivation to engage readers, although currently a popular topic, has been theoretically elusive, and the intersecting frameworks that define the field have been difficult to incorporate into either instructional frameworks or assessment plans.

Nevertheless, for practitioners who want to delve into the rich theoretical traditions in achievement motivation, the inquiry will yield some strong, time-tested practices. For example, researchers have revisited the constructs of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and unearthed some common misconceptions in relation to achievement. Several scholars (Sansone & Harackiewicz, 2000) have analyzed reward systems to determine which ones work and which do not in various instructional contexts. Other scholars have reviewed 30 years of research and presented current work on achievement motivation, including how instructional practices can actually contribute to increased motivation (Wigfield & Eccles, 2001). In addition, several researchers have taken great pains to translate the knowledge base on achievement motivation into specific practices for teachers (e.g., Alderman, 2004). Guthrie and his colleagues have directed their attention to motivation in literacy, particularly in the area of reading. For example, Guthrie, Wigfield, and Perencevich (2004) examined elementary school classroom contexts that promote engaged reading, focusing specifically on Concept-Oriented Reading Instruction (CORI)—a relatively new framework with potential that has yet to be realized, especially with adolescent learners, through ongoing development.

But one of the most significant early discussions of how motivation frameworks relate to specific practices in reading, particularly as reading actually occurs in classroom contexts, is Guthrie and Wigfield's edited book (1997), *Reading Engagement: Motivating Readers through Integrated Instruction*. In this text they present a framework in the form of a graphic that guides discussions, showing the intersection of factors that support individual engagement with those that contribute to coherent classroom contexts. *Motivation* and *engagement* are not sets of isolated cognitive constructs but the result of complex factors that play out in situated practices. Similarly, Wigfield and Eccles (2001) organize motivation frameworks as responses to three questions learners might ask: *Can I do this activity? Do I want to do this activity and why? What do I need to do to succeed?* We think this question framework is particularly effective because it allows practitioners to ponder how their students might answer each question and the reasons they may give for answering affirmatively or negatively (based in the frameworks), and then the specific interventions that teachers might offer to change students' answers from negative to positive responses. Wigfield and Eccles note that these complex intersecting frameworks deviate considerably from older models in which researchers focused on processes such as reinforcement or constructs such as internal drives, with a shift

toward a focus on the development of beliefs, values, and goals. They also emphasize the importance of looking at the developmental trajectory of motivation, not only in how children and youth change over time, but how their *perceptions* of the constructs—at least at an intuitive or self-reflective level—change, and, in turn change their beliefs, values, and goals. In Table 5.1, we use Wigfield and Eccles's three questions to organize, albeit at a very general level, a way of thinking about key motivation constructs in terms of struggling and normally achieving adolescent readers.

### INTEGRATING MOTIVATION INTO EXISTING INSTRUCTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

We have developed sets of practices based on many motivation frameworks, including the ones highlighted in Table 5.1. Because the frameworks overlap, one set of practices based on a particular foundation might engender other sets of practices based on complementary research. For example, there are motivating ways of presenting books and other reading material to children and youth; there are motivating ways to engage adolescents who have become disengaged with reading in school; and there are ways to design and present tasks related to reading that learners find more engaging than typical school tasks.

Also, when looking more at the panorama of a classroom rather than at the microcosm of a particular reader transacting with a text, it is apparent that there are motivating ways of engaging students in an academically and socioculturally important manner. There are also discourses that cause readers to feel more confident and competent as readers—ways of respecting individual meaning constructions and opinions, as well as discursive practices, including feedback, that encourage students to tackle difficult texts and to sort out strategies that they can continue to use effectively. Overall, in the best of all possible classroom scenarios, one might see practices that tap various intersecting frameworks in creating supportive classroom environments populated by engaged readers who are motivated to critically understand texts. These students persevere to meet goals and feel in control of a repertoire of strategies. In theory, this sounds great. But how might we set up our classrooms and design instruction for all adolescent readers—especially with the range of competence and perceptions of competence in a typical classroom?

We revisit the frameworks and implications outlined in Table 5.1 in the following sections of this chapter. We realize that the dichotomy presented in the table is somewhat contrived, and that the criteria for assigning persons to the respective groups are often ambiguous and range greatly from setting to setting. Nevertheless, we use the classifications as one way to make several generalizations that we believe are important in

thinking about adolescents. Specifically, we examine why adolescents are much more than simply older readers, and why some did not develop the reading skills and strategies typically associated with a given developmental stage, grade level, or chronological age.

### PRACTICES FOR NORMALLY ACHIEVING READERS

As is apparent from Table 5.1, many adolescents who *are* competent readers and *believe* they are competent readers are increasingly unlikely to want to read in school and less likely to choose reading for pleasure the longer they are in school. Reading, which had almost universal appeal when these youth were in preschool and primary grades, has been replaced with reading-as-subject. Reading, which used to be an adventure, an engaging and nurturing social experience, becomes a set of tedious tasks leading to the demonstration of narrowly defined competencies—grades on homework assignments, quizzes and tests, and meeting standards. The trust that toddlers and primary-age children gave freely to teachers who guided them to exciting encounters in stories has been replaced by a distrust of teachers who assign reading in textbooks students view as ill-structured exposition and as compendia of not-so-useful information. This disengagement and lack of motivation can be reversed, at least in some measure, by drawing from the frameworks in Table 5.1.

#### Can I Do This Activity?

Normally achieving adolescents would usually respond, *Yes, I believe I have the ability to read and complete most tasks related to what I read.* They would qualify this confidence by subject areas, perceiving that they are more competent as readers in some subjects than others. But there are some practices that may further motivate them to read—especially in school—because the longer they encounter reading in school, the less motivated they are. These practices include the following:

- Providing more compelling reasons to read and to practice and build fluency with a range of texts accompanied by procedural feedback; this feedback includes information on what readers understand and how they understand it—not just competition and comparative performance or reading to cover the content, but a focus on reading to learn interesting things.
- Providing more instruction in important strategies coupled with more demanding reading. For example, the reading apprenticeship framework (Schoenbach, Greenleaf, Cziko, & Hurwitz, 1999) includes a focus on academic apprenticeship and feedback that enables readers to

**TABLE 5.1. The Relation of Three Key Motivation Questions to Adolescents' Literacy Learning and Instruction**

The key motivation question (posed by Wigfield & Eccles, 2001)	Constructs the question taps	Implications for struggling adolescents' literacy practices and growth	Implications for normally achieving adolescents' literacy practices and growth
<p><b>1. Can I do this activity?</b> <i>Literacy examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Can I read as well as I can do math?</li> <li>• Can I read as well as Erin or Jonathan?</li> <li>• Do I believe that I can read and understand this text?</li> <li>• Can I answer the questions at the end of a text at this level?</li> </ul>	<p><i>Self-competence; expectancy beliefs</i>—expectations of success across various academic areas, and in relation to others.</p> <p><i>Self-efficacy</i>—belief about one's ability to learn or perform at certain levels in connection with specific tasks (Schunk &amp; Pajares, 2001).</p>	<p>Struggling adolescents develop negative perceptions about ability by second grade; early in academic careers they start to disengage from reading and define themselves as incompetent; they read less, get less practice, and fall further behind peers. Individual tasks define various facets of incompetence; although they may have a generally negative set toward school reading, they may feel more positively toward reading related to enjoyment or to an after-school job.</p>	<p>Normally achieving adolescents believe that they are competent; they persist longer and work harder; when presented with difficult texts and tasks, they take on the challenge. Because they work hard and use effective strategies, they get feedback that their effort and strategies pay off, and they continue to achieve. Nevertheless, even for these youth, research shows that perceptions of academic competence decline the longer they are in school due to competition, norm-referenced grading and tests, and less individual attention (e.g., Covington &amp; Dray, 2001; Pintrich &amp; Schunk, 1996).</p>
<p><b>2. Do I want to do this activity and why?</b> <i>Literacy examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Which book would be easier to understand? (Choice = possibility for success = easier text or a skill set I have.)</li> <li>• How important is it to read the biology chapter and answer the questions at the end?</li> </ul>	<p><i>Expectancy-value model</i>—expectations for success and the value placed on success determine motivation to perform various tasks.</p>	<p>As in the first question, research shows that early in their academic careers, children distinguish competence across school subject domains. By mid-primary grades, they have sorted out what they choose to work on, based on expectations for success. Struggling readers, who start to have trouble in early grades, do not expect success and hence place little value on working at texts and tasks at which they expect to fail. However, particularly as adolescents, they may place value</p>	<p>Similar to the response to the first question, even normally achieving students show declining expectations for success and diminished beliefs in their competency (e.g., Dweck &amp; Elliot, 1983; Eccles et al. 1998). In this model, adolescents are particularly interesting because they are more capable than children of distinguishing between more finely tuned components of task values; they are also better at "reading" their environments, interpreting feedback, and looking at subject task</p>
<p><b>(Value = grades; looking competent to teacher; doing as well as peers.)</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Will reading critically in this class result in anything important? (What do I need to do to get a grade; to be perceived as competent by the teacher or a valued peer?)</li> </ul>		<p><b>(subject task value judgments) on texts and tasks independent of their expectations for success—for example, things they like; desire to identify with social peers, etc. Girls have higher competency beliefs than boys for reading.</b></p>	<p><b>values in relation to social environments.</b> Adolescents could decide to work harder and more strategically at something, based on a carefully elaborated set of values.</p>
<p><b>3. What do I need to do to succeed?</b> <i>Literacy examples:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How should I read this history unit to do well on the exam? (What is particularly challenging about text structure and content? What are some strategies I can use to learn from this text?)</li> <li>• How will I know if I am not understanding the text and not using effective strategies? (or the reverse—how will I know what is working well?)</li> <li>• Based on the texts and the tasks I need to complete, and my knowledge of this subject and pertinent strategies, how can I do the best job on reading for the exam (or on discussion or to complete a project)?</li> </ul>	<p><i>Self regulation—of cognition, motivation, and affect when presented with various tasks and contexts</i> (Pintrich &amp; Zusho, 2001).</p> <p>Planning and goal setting, along with activating perceptions of the task and context in relation to self.</p> <p>Monitoring various aspects of self, task, and context.</p> <p>Using a repertoire to regulate self, task, context.</p>	<p>It is well documented that struggling readers do not self-regulate as well as normally achieving readers (e.g., Pressley, 2006). They rely on ineffective strategies and are not adept at monitoring their understanding; they are not as facile at relating what they know to the topic at hand (they are likely to actually know less because they read less than normally achieving peers) and are not as likely as skilled readers to vary their strategies according to text types and difficulty or variations in task demands.</p>	<p>Normally achieving readers can self-regulate and employ strategies; however, they lack the opportunities in school to read critically, to get feedback on the effectiveness of their strategies, and to develop personally relevant purposes and goals. In short, much or most of the reading they do does not require them to use and get feedback on the self-regulation of which they are capable. If they succeed in understanding difficult texts, they need feedback about which strategies work to meet specific goals and to feel confident that they can read difficult texts because of strategies within their control (e.g., the West Ed apprenticeship model).</p>

attribute success to something at which they are getting better. Readers talk to one another about what they understand in reading challenging texts and which strategies they used to understand the text.

### Do I Want to Do This Activity and Why?

The implications column of Table 5.1 states that even confident adolescents' perceptions about their competence as readers declines somewhat as they move up through the grades. This decline is due to increased competition, a focus on grades, difficulty of texts, and reading and task demands related to wider ranges of text genres with less assistance from teachers. The following practices are supported by motivation constructs:

- Providing more access to a range of engaging texts, particularly texts that are not like textbooks, including hybrid texts such as “pseudonarratives” and graphic text forms such as graphic novels, manga, and web pages.
- Providing choice among texts and options on tasks related to reading. A typical activity such as reading to answer questions at the end of a section or chapter would compete with options such as reading to summarize thoughts in a blog; reading to augment a media presentation; and reading multiple texts on a topic to compare authors' perspectives and credibility (Shanahan, 2003; Shanahan, Holschuh, & Hubbard, 2004).
- Allowing students to construct purposes for reading that meet personally relevant goals or enable them to engage in useful or interesting activities (e.g., O'Brien, 2003), such as reading to find out how to organize a neighborhood project or reading to complete an inquiry project.

### What Do I Need to Do to Succeed?

Ironically, many normally achieving adolescents feel successful in reading, but they have little idea about what it is that makes them successful, and they don't know how they can get even better at reading. As already noted, because they often lack goals that require critically reading difficult texts, they receive little guided practice, independent practice, and feedback regarding their efforts to read effectively. Given the underlying foundation that motivated reading is reading in which readers feel self-efficacious because they have control of their reading, here are some practices teachers can employ that are supported by the research in motivation:

- Using explicit teaching of strategies appropriate for specific disci-

plines and in a range of texts in those disciplines; explicit instruction must then lead to guided practice, independent practice, and the successful daily use of strategies learned.

- Providing ample opportunities (built into explicit instruction to independent reading frameworks) for students to receive feedback on their reading from teachers and peers; the feedback focuses on identifying what they are doing that can be attributed to their own knowledge and control, their self-regulation, their strategies, and their effective monitoring. This feedback is the key to the development of intrinsic motivation and feeling self-efficacious.
- Reducing the focus on competition, assessment, and grades and increasing opportunities to read strategically to meet different purposes.
- Providing multiple experiences wherein teachers and peers engage in dialogue about both the content and the process of reading a range of texts for a variety of purposes.

### PRACTICES FOR STRUGGLING READERS

In oversimplified terms, struggling readers are characterized as older readers who lack the skills and strategies of their more competent peers. Unfortunately, these same terms have defined struggling adolescent readers in many major research and policy reports. The instructional complement to this insufficient deficit view is that we simply need to provide struggling adolescents with the skills and strategies instruction that will move them up the developmental ladder—up to grade level or beyond Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) cut scores. The deficit perspective ignores or subordinates most of the “affective” dimensions of reading, which, from a contemporary perspective, include sociocognitive and sociocultural aspects of motivation.

In reality, struggling readers do lack requisite reading skills and strategies, but they also experience failure on a daily basis, develop negative self-perceptions, position themselves as incompetent (based on early self-appraisals and formal and informal appraisals from others), and develop accompanying intricate rationalizations and coping strategies that protect them from additional failure. These factors must be as systematically addressed as the teaching of skills and strategies—perhaps more so with disengaged learners. Practices based on key motivation constructs can be used by educators to revive students' confidence and self-efficacy and convince struggling readers that they can use and develop skills and strategies that result in meeting goals—goals that are attributable to factors within their control. Of course, there is some overlap in addressing the three questions above for normally achieving students, but in the case of

struggling readers, the instruction may be more like a targeted intervention due to the severity of disengagement and the need to resurrect something positive within relatively few remaining years in school.

### Can I Do This Activity?

The answer many struggling adolescent readers give to the question “Can I do this activity?” is “No” or “*I’m not so sure.*” These readers have years of evidence that convinces them that they might not succeed, and they weigh this evidence against future effort. When young people say “*I think that I lack the ability*” or “*I might not be successful,*” they often convince themselves not to try. They also believe that the factors that lead to their reading failure are beyond their control: They didn’t get to pick the texts, tasks, and tests; they have relatively little power to change teachers’ decisions regarding what to include in the curriculum; they have a limited repertoire of strategies to apply on various texts and tasks. The following instructional practices, based on the frameworks introduced in Table 5.1, address the motivational challenges associated with struggling adolescent readers:

- Reversing disengagement with self-efficacy. Struggling readers have already disengaged, and educators who work with adolescents can’t turn back the clock to intervene in early grades or easily change some students’ generally negative self-perceptions about ability. However, teachers can try to build or rebuild self-efficacy, which depends on an individual’s beliefs about his or her ability to perform a particular task. A practice that could yield results is to break down tasks that seem formidable and difficult into specific tasks with very clear benchmarks for success and a focus on meeting benchmarks one by one.

- Designing specific forms of feedback that show students that their progress can be attributed to actions and abilities within their control. If students read longer and more difficult books successfully, educators can build specific feedback into the task on how these readers are traversing the text features, structure, and vocabulary by using specific reading or study strategies. Educators can also share how students’ use of particular reading processes and strategies has contributed to specific outcomes, such as the ability to summarize, tell peers about a section of the text, or explain which strategies they have used to understand the text.

- Reducing the anxiety over reading as a performance or process, in and of itself, by focusing on reading as just one avenue toward activity or action. For example, reading may be one source of information students use to complete a multimedia project or reading may be just a tool to

learn about something you need to be able to do to demonstrate it for peers.

### Do I Want to Do This Activity and Why?

Table 5.1 explains that struggling adolescent readers are seldom enthused and often mildly to moderately disinterested in most reading tasks in school. They have the same negative, escalating feelings about reading in school that their more competent peers have: The longer they are in school, due to the factors noted, the less they like reading and the lower their perceptions about their ability. Confound this with their realizations in about second grade that they were behind their peers, that effort did not yield results, and that they lacked strategies with which to read to learn. These negative perceptions explain in large part why struggling readers don’t want to participate in reading activities and related tasks.

In addition, issues from the expectancy-value model cited in Table 5.1 impact adolescent readers’ beliefs and actions. Struggling students do not expect to gain anything tangible from reading; they read to meet externally established and imposed goals (e.g., read to answer the questions and complete the unit quiz). Furthermore, based on past feedback, self-appraisals, and the way they have been positioned in the institution of school (e.g., labels, special programs), even if they did decide to meet externally imposed goals, they would not expect to be very successful. In the following section we provide several instructional practices that can begin to address this seemingly intractable problem, some of which are variations on the practices provided earlier for normally achieving readers:

- Focus on accessibility. Accessibility, dimensions of a text that make it available to a reader, is not synonymous with matching reading ability to text readability. It is more like leveling, based on a range of factors including text difficulty, but also considering how difficulty can be mediated by interest, stance toward a topic, and determination and perseverance to read something one has decided to read. If students read something they really want to read and are invested in, then they choose to read it, in spite of the perception that it is difficult. This is true as long as the text is not *too* difficult on the word recognition/decoding level. The point we wish to make is that text accessibility leads to more reading, and practice leads to more fluency and competence.

- Promoting reengagement in reading for enjoyment and excitement. This can be achieved by providing students with many choices of reading materials from among a wide range of trade books and genres.



This range would include texts that are popular among adolescents, such as graphic novels, manga, and digital texts. Reading these engaging texts should also be part of instruction in various disciplines and should supplement or supplant textbooks when possible. Use of these texts should *not* lead to typical outcomes such as writing reports or answering questions. If exciting texts lead to disengaging typical tasks, it defeats the purpose of using them.

- Providing positive, specific feedback directed at facilitating self-efficacy, personal goals, and strategy use, with a focus on successes. If students choose—even with reservations—to engage in a reading task, they are more likely to want to engage in this task in the future if they have evidence that they were successful and accomplished something. Stiggins, Arter, Chappuis, and Chappuis's (2004) ideas that focus on formative assessment directed back to learners apply here. Good vehicles for providing this kind of feedback include teacher conferences or peer-to-peer conferences, wherein students share and discuss reading and strategies.

- Focusing on more appealing reading outcomes instead of requiring only typical outcomes such as answering questions, writing reports, and writing summaries. For example, constructing a menu of variations. In previous sections of this chapter we noted several examples of outcomes that would be appealing to adolescent readers, such as writing a blog (or contributing to a wiki) or producing a multimedia project. In curriculum planning, it makes sense to list all of the typical tasks educators might assign to students in one column, and then in another column list possible options that meet the same or similar instructional objectives. We have had success with media inquiry projects in which students self-selected project partners, outlined and storyboarded self-selected project ideas, and then worked from daily contracts in which they (and we) could track how they met their daily, weekly, and project goals (O'Brien, 2006). These projects required students to use a range of media, including print; they read to do research on the topic using both print and digital sources; and they synthesized their reading into multimodal texts.

- Eliciting self-selected purposes. This is a strategy already listed for normally achieving students. Rather than giving students topics and purposes for reading, educators can construct projects in which learners select topics and outcomes. Student choice and autonomy lead to motivation and engagement. The multimedia projects discussed above are a good example of this concept.

## What Do I Need to Do to Succeed?

Struggling readers often draw a blank when this question is posed to

them. As noted in Table 5.1, these adolescents lack a repertoire of strategies, have difficulty selecting appropriate strategies from ones they do know, or continue to use ineffective strategies. As in the case of normally achieving readers, although less often, some struggling readers think they are improving but aren't sure why, and, across the curriculum, they receive too little instruction and practice in comprehending challenging texts. We reiterate the motivation construct stated for competent readers that underlies this question: Motivated reading is reading in which readers feel self-efficacious because they have control of their reading, and they can read with confidence and an expectation of understanding what they read. The following instructional practices tap into some of the ideas already discussed for normally achieving readers, but focus more on both the lack of typical skills and strategies among struggling readers and the effect of students' negative perceptions about their ability to succeed on various tasks during particular literacy performances:

- Providing explicit instruction leading to guided and independent practice. Most struggling readers need explicit instruction in literacy strategies appropriate for specific disciplines and in a range of texts in those disciplines, particularly in using strategies with the highest utility that meet both teachers' and students' goals. For example, summarizing, exploring question-answer relationships, inferencing, and monitoring understanding are processes that should be supported with explicit strategies instruction. Some of the lowest performing struggling readers need to work on word-level strategies and build fluency. We emphatically repeat, however, that *explicit instruction must lead to guided practice, independent practice, and the successful daily use of strategies*. For example, in recent reviews of 20 years of strategies instruction, researchers (Dole, 2003; Duffy, 2003) concluded that educators are very good at teaching instructional strategies but not as proficient at providing opportunities for learners to use them.

- Providing specific feedback. Struggling readers need more feedback about specific skills they are doing well and those on which they need additional work. Feedback helps readers know that what they are doing is both effective and attributable to something within their control. Understanding the implications of their actions will positively effect adolescent readers' perceptions about their ability and, more specifically, their self-efficacy. Written individual feedback, specific classroom feedback and praise, and feedback in teacher or peer conferences are all formats that could help struggling readers understand how well they are learning effective strategies and monitoring their understanding. Other helpful practices include reducing the focus on competition, assessment, and grades; increasing opportunities for students to read strategically to

meet different purposes; and providing time for teachers and students, and students and their peers, to talk about both the content and the process of reading a range of texts for a variety of purposes.

CONCLUSION

As we have discussed in this chapter, motivation is not a fixed construct. Teachers can use their understanding of motivation and engagement to improve literacy practices, achievement, and students' perceptions of their abilities. Examining motivation constructs from the perspectives of learners and responding to the three questions in Table 5.1 provide tools with which educators can map significant research-based ideas and eloquent theoretical models onto day-to-day practices. Obviously, from both the initial discussion of the motivation frameworks and the instructional practices based on them, there is a lot of overlap and intersection of various constructs within the framework. But if educators employ most of the constructs to reframe or modify instruction, positive benefits will ensue.

DISCUSSION AND ACTIVITIES

In order to work to transform relatively complex theoretical frameworks and models of motivation into practices, we have read widely in the fields of motivation in general and achievement motivation in particular. We have also implemented many of the ideas we have gleaned in both middle and high school settings, studied what happened, and modified our approaches to reflect what we learned. The instructional practices section of the chapter, organized around several key questions, could lead to many specific activities. We want to recommend the following ideas:

- 1. Read the research base and work leading to key motivation constructs. An understanding of these constructs will help you comprehend why particular modifications of tasks and literacy contexts should make a difference in students' perceptions and achievement.
- 2. Systematically map out modifications that could be made to your current instructional plans. A planning activity that we have used successfully with our school-based colleagues is one in which they have listed current reading assignments and related activities in one column, and then have used a multiple column bridging chart to explore alternatives. Part of this activity requires the use of some existing frameworks for systematically critiquing current practices with a goal of modifying as many as possible so that they are more motivating. For example, we use the "Six C's" (*choice, challenge, control, collaboration, constructing meaning, and consequences*), generated by Turner and Paris (1995), to provide a way to critique existing instructional frameworks. The purpose of the Six C's is to help teachers think of open-ended tasks rather than the more

TABLE 5.2. Transforming Literacy Tasks Using the Six C's.

The Six C's (Turner & Paris, 1995)	Typical closed literacy tasks	Transformation to more open-ended, motivating literacy tasks
<p><i>Choice:</i> Provide students with authentic choices and purposes for literacy. Recast activities to emphasize the enjoyment and informational value of literacy; do not refer to daily tasks as work but instead rename them by their function (e.g., ask students to plan an event by writing . . . and reading).</p> <p><i>Challenge:</i> Allow students to modify tasks so that the difficulty and interest levels are challenging. Demonstrate the many ways one can complete tasks; show concrete examples to students of successful but different approaches to tasks; teach students to assess whether tasks are too difficult or too easy for them and how to adjust goals or strategies for appropriate difficulty; point out how students have molded tasks to their interests; and assign tasks that can be modified in many ways.</p> <p><i>Control:</i> Show students how they can control their learning. Teach students how to evaluate what they know and how to evaluate and monitor their learning. Students are probed by teachers with such questions as: Are you focused? What's more important? Students are guided to use inner speech to self-monitor.</p>	<p>In eighth-grade science class, students read an assigned portion of Chapter 3 and then work on the follow-up lab. Each lab group is responsible for writing up an oral report of their findings and the group leader, assigned by the teacher, presents it to the class.</p> <p>In a high school reading lab designed for students who struggle the most in reading (defined as the lowest 2-3% in performance on comprehension and vocabulary subtests of the state achievement test), students can pick partners and choose among several topics focusing on the impact of violence in the media on adolescents. Each pair completes an inquiry project based on teacher guidelines.</p> <p>In a middle school language arts class, students read portions of the book <i>Maniac McGee</i> for homework, in which they have discussions or answer questions about the portion of the book assigned for each day. They often turn in answers to the questions posed by the teacher for each portion of the book.</p>	<p>Using the classroom library and a menu of web pages, students can choose any combination of books or other texts that they think will help them complete a lab. They collaborate on the lab and choose among several different products for presenting the results, including a presentation on a web page.</p> <p>The students in the reading lab are given the broad topic, "The impact of violence in the media on adolescents." Each pair is asked to submit a plan in which they decide on which medium (e.g., film, TV, video games) they want to use. In addition, they have to plan a storyboard the process they will use and then plan a possible outcome of their project based on their perception of the level of difficulty and challenge they think is appropriate for their abilities and time frame (e.g., design a web page or a multimedia project presentation on PowerPoint; make a mini-documentary).</p> <p>In a middle school reading "intervention" class for the lowest-level readers in the school, students read <i>Tears of a Tiger</i>. In between whole-class discussions, the students participate in peer groups focused on metacognitive conversations (Greenleaf, Cziko, &amp; Hurwitz, 1999). The students share their evolving understanding as well as the strategies they use to meet different goals in reading the text. Through sharing both their meaning-making and the ways they tackle the text, each learner feels more control and confidence.</p>

(continued)



TABLE 5.2. (continued)

The Six C's (Turner & Paris, 1995)	Typical closed literacy tasks	Transformation to more open-ended, motivating literacy tasks
<p><b>Collaboration:</b> Emphasize the positive aspects of giving and seeking help. Provide students with opportunities to work with many different peers; students are taught how to teach each other by emphasizing the giving of clues, not answers; many individual tasks are recast as paired or group tasks (e.g., paired reading vs. oral round-robin reading).</p> <p><b>Constructing meaning:</b> Emphasize strategies and metacognition for constructing meaning. Provide students with a repertoire of strategies in order to respond flexibly in reading and writing situations; students need extensive applications of comprehension as well as encoding and decoding strategies to assist them in acquiring an understanding of what literacy is as well as how to use and understand it.</p>	<p>The teacher engages in recitation with students in a middle school health class. The topic is how to administer first aid to someone who has accidentally consumed poison. The teacher asks a series of questions, calling on one student after another. Students respond by rapidly reciting information from the text.</p> <p>In a high school history class, the students read a chapter entitled "Early Americans." They are assigned to read sections of the text each night for homework and to turn in questions after reading each section. When the students read, they usually read only to find answers to the questions; a typical strategy they use is skimming to find a statement that relates to or includes information needed to answer each question.</p> <p>Middle school language arts students work on a collaborative inquiry project in which teacher-assigned groups study a "famous person." To pick the person, each member puts his or her preferred name on a piece of paper and one group member draws a name out of a can. The groups are given an outline to follow in constructing the project and a fixed number of points are assigned to each section of the outline.</p>	<p>Students in a high school biology class, work in self-selected peer groups. The members of each group divide up tasks, with some members using resources to find answers to study guide questions, some introducing information they have done as homework, and some writing to synthesize information that the group will turn in as a shared product.</p> <p>In a high school history class studying the Civil War, the students are critically reading a portion of the text entitled "The Story Behind the Story of Pickett's Charge," using a variation of the three-level comprehension guide (Herber, 1970). In the first level students find information in the text that supports statements and explain if the information is directly stated or requires minor inferencing. In the second level they find multiple places in the text that support inferences. In the third level they reread sections to synthesize main themes that they use to construct applied-level comprehension statements.</p> <p>Students in a high school literacy lab select an inquiry topic based on interest. Then they plan the project based on available resources, the amount of time needed, and the deadline for completion (e.g., a school open house when they will present their work to parents/caregivers). For each workday they write up task goals that are reviewed first by them and then by a teacher. Based on review/conferences, they revise goals when necessary.</p>

typical closed tasks. Table 5.2 defines each of the C's and shows possible transformations of closed tasks to open-ended tasks.

- Videotape several classroom lessons (e.g., lessons you teach and lessons taught by peer educators). The taped lessons should include interactions between you and your students and segments where you provide feedback to students during reading instruction and related tasks. Using a framework for analyzing classroom interactions, critique your lesson interactions or a peer's interactions and list ways you or your colleagues could improve upon how you motivate students via your comments, suggestions, and feedback. To analyze classroom interactions to determine what motivates students and enhances literacy learning, we have used several frameworks, including one adapted from Alderman (2004) titled "Guidelines for Effective Praise" (p. 254). Alderman's table is based on the work of Jerry Brophy (1981) and juxtaposes effective versus ineffective praise offered by teachers to students. For each type of praise listed as ineffective, it is useful for educators to reflect upon how to modify praise, monitor what it "looks like" via videotaped lessons, and then note the effect of the modification on student motivation. Videotaping lessons, analyzing interactions, and reflecting on the acts of teaching and learning are powerful ways to study motivation constructs and set goals to enhance adolescents' literacy learning.

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## PART II

# Developing Reading and Writing Strategies for Multiple Contexts